

Goodnight My Angel

by Ana

Category: Star Wars

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 1999-10-07 09:00:00

Updated: 1999-10-07 09:00:00

Packaged: 2016-04-27 12:14:25

Rating: T

Chapters: 1

Words: 3,705

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: A sweet story about comfort in the night on a cold, dark shipâ€| (*Hints* at Q/O)

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Title: Goodnight, My Angel Author: Anastasia Categories: angst, h/c, pre-slash, missing scene, challenge response Rating: PG for implied relationship of Q/O Pairing: Q/O, Anakin Status: Complete Warnings: If you don't like to see Obi-Wan as the stronger character, or you can't bear to see Anakin for what he really is (a small, scared little boy just wanting a bit of comfort), then this story is probably not for you. :) *And YES, that IS sarcasm you hear. Just READ the story already! Please?* Spoilers: A tiny bit for TPM's characters...nothing much by way of plot spoilers for the movie

Summary: A sweet story about comfort in the night on a cold, dark ship...

Feedback: Please, please, please!!!! I'm new to all this, and when I don't hear from anyone, I get a complex...Please save my beta readers from having to listen to me whine... :)

Disclaimers: We all know who these characters belong to (Thank you, Mr. Lucas!), so there's no question as to who's getting all the credit, money, attention, etc. for these wonderful men. (Hint: It's not me...) However, I *would* like to use them as props for a few story-telling bouts....and maybe a few other things. Mr. Lucas, can Obi-Wan and Qui-Gon please come out to play? Thank you!

Credits: The song at the end of this piece is "Lullabye (Goodnight, My Angel)" by Billy Joel. It is copyright 1992 Joelsongs (BMI) and written here just as the lyrics are printed in Billy Joel's 'Complete Hits' song collection. I am in no way stealing this song or using it for my own profit...it just fit too perfectly into my story and I *had* to use it. Thank you, Billy, for your wonderful music! :)

Odd note: In my spell check, lullaby is spelled just like this. But in Billy Joel's song, he consistently spells it 'lullabye'. So in the song and song title I've spelled it his way, but in my story, I've let spell check spell it *its* way. :)

Inspiration: Credit for the inspiration of this piece goes directly to Deejay who, after some group list talk about Ewan/Obi-Wan/singing, posted a suggestion to the M_A list saying that she could picture Obi-Wan singing to Anakin. The thought of that really stuck in my head and I tried to ignore it, but... We all know how *that* goes, don't we? :) In any case, my HUGE thanks to Deejay, whose idea-and almost every suggestion she made-appears in what follows. Thank you, Deejay. *waves and blows kisses* I haven't been *this* inspired in a very LONG time.

Thank yous: Thanks to Esmerelda, Kat, Megan, Holly, Kaly, and Deejay for being my own personal cheering section. :) And of COURSE for their *fast* beta readings and *wonderful* suggestions, comments, questions, corrections, etc. There is no way I'd post a story without you guys! You're the best!

Goodnight, My Angel by Anastasia

Obi-Wan lay awake long into the ship's night. Beside him, on a bed nearly too small to fit two grown people, Qui-Gon Jinn slept. His breathing was soft and even, the silky hair that Obi-Wan so loved to touch fanned out on the pillow all around his master's head. To the untrained eye, Qui-Gon was the picture of serenity; the calm, unshakable Master, even in repose. A veritable living angel.

* * *

The battle with the being on the desert of Tatooine had taken a lot out of the older Jedi. Much more than his master had let on, Obi-Wan knew. Qui-Gon had barely been able to get back to the ship, and as he lay exhausted and panting on the deck at Obi-Wan's feet, the apprentice had felt not only his Master's physical pain, but his mental anguish as well.

Qui-Gon was intensely bothered by what the creature might represent and the apprehension, which he could not fully eradicate, had radiated from him all day. Even through his many meditations, it had not been cleansed. And Obi-Wan knew that was a burden on his master as well. But on the Queen's ship, heading for the capital of the Republic in such an uncertain situation, was neither the time nor the place to force a conversation on the subject, and so the topic had been mutually dropped.

* * *

Rising up onto one elbow, careful not to jar the bed, Obi-Wan studied his sleeping master. In the darkness, Qui-Gon's face was all planes and shadows, from the smooth, high forehead to the sloped nose and strong chin. Obi-Wan frowned slightly, beautiful as it was. The man *did* paint the picture of the proper Jedi...to the untrained eye. To his padawan, he was a troubled man with ten worlds of worries on his shoulders.

Obi-Wan reached out, lightly running one finger along Qui-Gon's

cheekbone. The weather-worn skin was flushed, as if sun-burned. Concerned, he touched the back of his hand to his master's forehead, finding it warm, but not feverishly so. The tips of two fingers, placed gently upon a long, delicate throat found a pulse too quick for normal sleep. Which brought him to his master's eyes.

While everything else about Qui-Gon remained under the Jedi Master's tight control, Obi-Wan could see the other man's eyes moving rapidly beneath closed lids. Long lashes fluttered, eyelids flickered, and Obi-Wan knew that Qui-Gon was dreaming. Vividly. The incongruous sight of a body trained not to show undue emotion, and the eyes which could not be stilled in their attempt to do so, threatened to crush the breath from the apprentice's chest.

Qui-Gon had not wanted closeness this night. He had not wanted to be held, and comforted, and gentled. The demons he fought in his mind had been too many, too strong within him, and he had wanted to fight them alone. It was not unusual for him to want to deal with matters of the mind on his own...but it was unnecessary.

At Qui-Gon's side, one large hand twitched, almost imperceptibly, and Obi-Wan's heart nearly shattered. *Why must you always be so contained, my Master?* his mind cried out. *Why do you believe it is only I who am in need of strength? Allow me to lend you my strength for once, Master. Allow me to be strong for you.*

A sudden ripple in the Force drew Obi-Wan's attention away from his master. Lifting his head as if listening for something, the younger man concentrated on seeing and feeling the Living Force around him.

The disturbance was small and not centered on his Master, so he widened his range, allowing his senses to scan the ship. He picked up on the ripple and followed its trail back to... There! He had it.

Moving slowly into a sitting position, Obi-Wan swung his legs over the side of the bed. Standing up, he gasped in shock as his warm, bare feet met the icy coldness of the deck. Glancing back to be sure his master was undisturbed, he searched the small room with his eyes, finally locating his cloak. Not bothering with shoes, he scooped up the covering from a nearby chair and slipped it on over his white sleep attire.

Heading for the door, he hesitated. Walking quietly back to the bed, he laid a hand softly on his master's forehead. //Sleep.// his mind told the older man's. //Sleep and be at peace. All is well.//

Gathering the brown material of his cloak around himself to ward off the chill of the ship, Obi-Wan headed out the door...and nearly stumbled over the tiny figure hunched into a ball in the middle of the dim corridor.

"Anakin!" he exclaimed, more loudly than he'd intended. This was most definitely the source of the Force ripple. They'd left the boy to spend the night with Padme, who had volunteered to stay with him in order to give the two Jedi a bit of time to themselves. *What,* Obi-Wan wondered, *was he doing way down here?*

Kneeling beside the boy, he saw that he was trembling. Whether from the cold or something else, he didn't know, but he certainly knew misery when he saw it. As Obi-Wan leaned back on his heels to remove his cloak, the boy's sandy head, pillowed on his arms, began to turn from side to side.

"No! Nooo!!" he shouted, in a slumber-rough voice. "You can't! You can't have him!"

He moved wildly in his sleep, gasping for breath as if he were running from something. Tiny, tanned hands clawed out, reaching toward some unseen horror. His small, determined jaw clenched around the words, as if his soul were fighting to say them even as his spirit fought to keep them inside.

"Ani, Ani," Obi-Wan chanted soothingly as he pulled first one arm and then the other from the long sleeves, inwardly cursing his own slowness. "It's okay, Ani. You're safe now."

"Leave him alone!" the sleeping boy screeched. "He saved us..." Short legs kicked out, moved restlessly against the ship's deck. "No..." He choked the word out. "He saved...me. Mom! Mom!"

Obi-Wan, cloak finally in hand, bent down to lay it on the flooring and lifted the small boy onto it. With some difficulty, he managed to wrap the flailing arms and legs inside of it, swaddling the youngster in hopes of quieting him. Feeling clumsy and awkward, he somehow managed to make it to his feet. Force! He'd performed moves in his katas that required less balance and concentration. Cradling the writhing form to his shoulder as he would an infant, he swayed from side to side in what he prayed was a calming motion.

"Mom! Mom! I will come back for you! I will!" The boy's head swiveled back and forth, giving the appearance of someone trying to shake a terrible image. His feet swung like pendulums, banging into Obi-Wan's thighs with clockwork-like regularity. There would likely be bruises by morning.

The fear and confusion in Anakin were palpable. They rose from him like steam from a tea kettle. Reaching unobtrusively into the boy's mind, he skimmed the dreams, pulling out odd images: Sebulba crashing the pod, Watto dealing with Qui-Gon, Anakin walking away from his mother, Qui-Gon fighting the black and red menace in the dark cloak. Qui-Gon fighting the black and red menace... Qui-Gon fighting... Qui-Gon...

So Qui-Gon was not the only one being haunted by memories of their attacker this night.

That's it, isn't it, Ani? he thought to himself. *You feared losing the one person who, literally, means your life to you.* For the second time that night, Obi-Wan thought his heart would break. To have been freed by Qui-Gon and taken from his mother, and then to have Qui-Gon attacked by the Dark creature and nearly taken from him must have terrified Anakin. How he must have feared being alone!

Obi-Wan reached up and began to rub the cloaked back in small, comforting circles, as his Master had often done for him when he had been young and afraid. Force, this one was too small to have such

large worries.

As Obi-Wan walked back and forth in the corridor, murmuring words of comfort into the tousled hair, the youngster's movements stilled and his screams quieted, changed into hoarse whispers and rivers of tears.

"Oh, Ani," Obi-Wan said softly, as he felt the warm wetness soaking through his sleep shirt. "I'm so sorry you're hurting."

His back and arms were beginning to ache from the weight of the child. Slowly, not wanting to alarm the boy with sudden movements, he moved to the wall directly outside their cabin, leaning against it for support. After resting a bit, the Jedi apprentice allowed his knees to bend and slid himself down the rough wall until he was sitting, rather haphazardly, on the deck.

Rearranging himself and repositioning the brown cloak around his charge, he settled the youngster on his lap so that his head rested in the crook of Obi-Wan's elbow. Using one of the sleeves from the cloak, he gently wiped the tears away from the smooth face, whispering soft nonsense as he did so.

"Master Qui-Gon!"

The loud shout from the finally-quieted boy jerked Obi-Wan out of his almost-reverie.

The boy was sitting up, blue eyes wide, seemingly almost as surprised as the young padawan.

"Ani," he said, drawing the boy's attention. "You're here with me. You're safe."

"Where is Master Qui-Gon?" The voice was quieter now, almost a whimper, but the question was a demand made by a frightened young child.

Stroking a hand up and down the youngster's arm, Obi-Wan requested, "Anakin, look at me."

The little boy obediently turned sleepy eyes in the apprentice's direction.

"You are safe here. I promise you that. And Master Qui-Gon is safe. He was unharmed in the fight today. He is in our cabin, sleeping...as you should be doing..." He added the last part with a small smile for Anakin, and was rewarded with a brilliant smile in return.

"I did try," the youngster said honestly. "I stayed with Padme as Master Qui-Gon told me to. But it was so cold. And I wanted..." He closed his eyes and turned his face away from Obi-Wan.

"What, Ani? What did you want?"

"I was scared. I tried not to be...because Jedi's aren't...but...every time I closed my eyes I could see the red 'saber and the black cloak, and I was afraid..." He shuddered.

Obi-Wan tightened his grip on the little boy, wanting to protect him

from the ghosts that filled his mind and his dreams.

"Is that why you came looking for us, Anakin? To make sure Master Qui-Gon was okay?"

The blonde head nodded against Obi-Wan's arm. "Only, it was such a long way down here, and I was so cold. And. Very. Very. Tired." His voice dropped off as if just the mention of sleep made him want to drift off.

"You **can** sleep now, Ani," the apprentice told him, his tone low. "I'll hold you and watch over you, to make sure nothing happens to you. And we'll stay right here, with Master Qui-Gon, so you'll know that he is safe, as well."

Blue eyes popped open for a moment, searching Obi-Wan's face for the sincerity behind the words. Again, smile was met with smile.

And Anakin did settle down into a sleep-like posture, but unconsciousness refused to overtake him. Obi-Wan thought about the times during his childhood when, curled up beside his master, Qui-Gon had urged him to find sleep and Obi-Wan had simply not been able to do so.

As a still-confused and over-tired Anakin began to silently cry again with the frustration of not being able to obey the young Jedi's simplest wishes, Obi-Wan began to softly sing.

"Goodnight, my angel Time to close your eyes And save these questions for another day I think I know what you've been asking me I think you know what I've been trying to say I promised I would never leave you And you should always know Wherever you may go No matter where you are I never will be far away"

It was a song that a much younger Qui-Gon had sung to a much younger Padawan learner, many years before. Although Obi-Wan remembered little surrounding the time he'd first heard Qui-Gon sing the song to him, he did remember the song and what it meant to him.

Obi-Wan had become deathly ill with the Anvirian Flu, burning up with fever, out of his mind with horrifying dreams and hallucinations. The symptoms had lasted several days and then, as the Anvirian Flu progressed, his temperature had dropped far below the normal range and he'd been overcome with convulsions and chills, the threat of spiraling down into a coma never far away.

"Goodnight, my angel Now it's time to sleep And still so many things I want to say Remember all the songs you sang for me When we went sailing on an emerald bay And like a boat out on the ocean I'm rocking you to sleep The water's dark And deep inside this ancient heart You'll always be a part of me"

From one extreme to the other and back again, the young Obi-Wan had suffered through the viral attack, with Qui-Gon at his side every minute. His temperature had see-sawed up and down dangerously for two and a half weeks and it had taken him (and, he suspected, his master) months to fully recover.

And through it all, though Qui-Gon had talked to him, soothed him, hushed his ramblings and meditated for a quick end to his suffering,

the song had been the only thing that had truly calmed the sick young padawan and ultimately allowed him to heal. Qui-Gon had discovered its effects somewhere after the first week of the illness, and from then until the end, he'd made the song his mantra. Though he often said his voice left much to be desired, Obi-Wan had found it **very** desirable.

"Goodnight, my angel Now it's time to dream And dream how wonderful your life will be Someday you child may cry And if you sing this lullaby Then in your heart There will always be a part of me"

The song had meant so much to Obi-Wan, and it still did. Then, it had meant that his master was there for him, that he always would be. It had made him feel special, loved, safe when he'd been ill and hurting and doubting he'd ever feel well again. The song had touched him in so many ways, had seemed to be sung just for him from Qui-Gon's heart.

And now, as he sat rocking the gift of a child who had found him this night, he found it difficult to sing the words without his soul shattering itself into a million pieces from the emotions surrounding it.

Obi-Wan stopped his rocking and singing just long enough to check the little boy in his arms. Anakin's breathing, no longer noisy and labored, was soft and even. His thoughts were peaceful and the dreams no longer bothered him.

So wrapped up was Obi-Wan in the well-being of his charge, that he didn't hear the door to the cabin open, or see the man inside step out just far enough to allow the door to close behind him. He didn't see the look of unguarded pride and passion shining in the older Jedi's eyes, didn't feel the love that rolled towards him, as waves crashing upon the shore.

As Obi-Wan took one last, steadyng breath, to try and finish the last part of the song...the part that was always hardest for him to sing and hear...there was suddenly another voice, a stronger voice, taking over and once again seeming to sing just for him.

"Someday we'll all be gone But lullabyes go on and on... They never die That's how you And I Will be"

And now a tear did make its way down Obi-Wan's tired features. A tear of sadness for the last verse, the meaning of which seemed to change for him each time he heard it. A tear of happiness for the life he had with Qui-Gon Jinn. A tear of uncertainty for what the future would hold for them.

"Thank you, Obi-Wan," Qui-Gon said, his voice deep and his eyes misty. "For all that you are to me. And for all that you've done tonight...for both of us."

Stooping down to take the sleeping youth from his padawan's loving grasp, he carefully balanced Ani against his broad shoulder and offered Obi-Wan a hand up from the hard deck. Moving back into the darkness of their cabin, Qui-Gon's careful eye didn't miss the stiff movements of the younger man, or the way he gingerly attempted to rub the circulation back into his arms when he thought Qui-Gon was occupied with settling the boy onto the cabin's spare sleep couch.

When Anakin was snugly secured between several thick blankets, Qui-Gon held out a hand to his padawan, who was standing at the foot of the couch, eyes on the youngster he was so seemingly attached to now. After a moment, Obi-Wan took his hand, and allowed himself to be led back to the bed he had left so long ago.

They still did not speak of the evil attacker, but as they lay there, beside each under the thick quilt, Qui-Gon allowed himself to be held close by Obi-Wan. Held and comforted and gentled as his padawan had longed to do before. And the older Jedi well understood the feeling of the need to take care of a loved one.

Face-to-face with Obi-Wan, as close to him as he could be without actually **being** the other man, Qui-Gon was soothed beyond words as his hair was smoothed, his back rubbed, his face stroked.

"Goodnight my angel, my Obi-Wan," he said quietly, as he fell into his apprentice's caress and fell asleep, his chin resting in the other man's hair.

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End
file.